

Reply to Criticisms

**CONCERNING
TEXT BOOK
AND OTHER
SCHOOL
QUESTIONS**



RB193144



DUKE OF CORNWALL

AT TORONTO UNIVERSITY

*October 11th, 1901, on the occasion of his receiving the
Degree of L.L.D.*

THE DUKE'S REPLY.

In reply, the Duke said :—

“ Mr. Chancellor and gentlemen,—We thank you for the kind welcome to this Province which you offer us in the name of the University of Toronto, and I shall have much pleasure in conveying the renewal of your allegiance to his Majesty the King. Looking at this handsome pile, and its ample equipment, we feel that you and the Government of the Province are to be congratulated upon the courage and energy with which you faced the task of recreating your University after the disastrous fire to which you refer, and upon the success which has crowned your efforts. You have earned the gratitude of all Canadians for the steady advance of your steps with the onward march of mind, throwing wide your doors to welcome whatever may conduce towards the increase of intellectual culture and scientific development. It is a fitting crown to the admirable and complete system of education, of which Ontario justly boasts.

“I deeply appreciate the high honor of a degree in your distinguished University, which you have just conferred upon me. At the same time you have reminded me that the undergraduates' roll bears the

name of my dear father, [Applause] and, I further notice that he has remained in that position for more than forty years. [Applause.]

"The Duchess joins with me in wishing that, as years roll on, the University of Toronto may continue to send forth from its halls not only men of cultured minds, but leaders in thought and action, to take part in guiding the destinies of this Province and the great Dominion." [Loud cheers.]

(*From the Toronto Globe, July 5th, 1901.*)

UNAUTHORIZED TEXT BOOKS

Objections have frequently been taken to the use of unauthorized text books in the public schools of the Province, especially the use of such unauthorized books as summaries, notes or helps. The objection does not rest solely on the cost of the books or the increased burden to parents, great in the exaggerate as that burden may be. It rests rather on the pronounced intellectual and moral evils that result from the use of such helps and notes. It is said, and with much force, that on the intellectual side they are sterilizing. Their purpose forbids all play of imagination and all development of reason. They cram the memory with lifeless and disconnected facts. Success in mastering their dry-as-dust contents establishes vicious standards of knowledge. Sham and superficiality replace thorough and honest scholarship.

But whilst the financial, intellectual and moral evils of the use of these text books are pronounced, it cannot be denied that the books themselves are a natural product of the times. This hurried age cannot plod through elaborate treatises—it demands summaries.

This age of complex interests can hope to understand those interests only in abstracts. The civilized world, in the presence of an ever-increasing body of knowledge, must take refuge in notes and abridgments. The public school is the world in miniature. What wonder then that the spirit of the world should enter into the business life of the school? Notes and helps present to the busy teacher an ever-ready supply of problems for his classes. To the immature and inexperienced teacher who is preparing candidates for examinations they offer in a very condensed but objectionable form the fruits of experience. Even if the teacher discourages the use of these books, what is to prevent the pupil buying them?

To the fact that these books meet the needs of the age are due their appearance and persistence in the schools of every modern country where the free printing of books is allowed. They are common in Great Britain and Ireland; France is striving unsuccessfully to free herself from them, while school boards throughout the United States, abandoning hope of ousting them from the schools, now recognize them as necessary evils.

It is known that these books are published and sold in Ontario, but they are not sold so freely as in other countries. They may be purchased and used by any person, student or otherwise, but they are not sold to pupils at the dictation of the teacher or the school board; and they are not used as text books in any public school. Ontario's comparative freedom from the evil is due to the persistent care and effort of the Department of Education. Its authority is limited and its work is difficult. It cannot prevent the publication and sale of the books. Any pupil or any teacher may purchase and study them. But such influence and authority as it possesses it has thrown unreservedly against these unauthorized books.

Time and again in the House and on the platform have the late Minister and the present Minister referred to the regrettable appearance of these books in Ontario. Teachers-in-training at the Model and Normal Schools and Normal College are carefully instructed as to the unfortunate pedagogical results of the use of these books. Its advisory circulars and correspondence will show that the Education Department has steadily set its face against these books. In urging that few text books of any kind be used in the junior classes it strives to remove all temptation to introduce them. It has been said that departmental examinations are an encouragement to the use of these books. Within the last three years the primary and Form I. examinations have been abolished. The authority of the local Entrance board has been made paramount. The public school leaving examination has been remodelled, so that the principal's report is accepted for one-half the subjects of the public school leaving examination, and for the other half, the principal's report has a value scarcely inferior to that of the examinations themselves. Reference to the examination papers will show, too, a decided effort on the part of the examiners to ask such questions as cannot be satisfactorily answered from these notes and helps. Surely the influence of the Education Department has not wavered in its support of its own principles.

But, beyond its influence; the Education Department has set its authority against these books. The statute in that behalf reads:— “In case any teacher shall negligently or wilfully permit any unauthorized text books to be used by the pupils of his school, he shall for each such offence, on conviction thereof before a Police Magistrate or Justice of the Peace, be liable to a penalty not exceeding ten dollars.” The Minister cannot by personal visits to the 8000 public schools of the Province enforce this law. He must rely upon the school boards, teachers and inspectors. Practically the school boards, teachers and inspectors declare annually to the Minister—and the Minister has no reason to doubt the character of that declaration—that the law with regard to unauthorized text books is strictly observed. To leave no opportunity for misunderstanding, the Education Department issued not long since a special notice to all inspectors, directing their attention to the unauthorized notes and helps, and instructing them to withhold the Provincial grant whenever such notes were in use. The authority of the Education Department, it is plain to see, has not wavered in support of its own laws. But there is a point beyond which the law cannot go and ought not to go. It cannot prevent the publication of the books, and it cannot prevent pupils or teachers from buying and reading them.

(From The Toronto Globe.)

CHANGES IN TEXT BOOKS.

The question of text book changes must be approached with the conviction that the school children of Ontario are to have the best text books and that the parents of Ontario will insist that their children have the best text books. This admits of no argument. There is a second conviction equally beyond argument : The best text books of ten years ago are not necessarily the best text books of to-day. Ten years in the history of human thought and progress in the present era is greater than fifty or a hundred years in the centuries that are past. Every decade brings new outlooks and new problems. In their own way text books should represent the new outlooks. The text books of 1890 cannot always faithfully represent the world of 1900. Of course, this is not true of all text books. The character of its subject or the wisdom of its author may retain for a

book its superiority far beyond a decade. The Minister of Education is singularly fortunate in that at the close of the decade and century the list of authorized text books has needed but little revision. The revision, now completed, has affected only ten books or series of books out of a total of fifty-one books authorized in public and high schools.

The books thus revised during the last two or three years are the Public School Grammar, Public School Arithmetic, Public School Geography, the Copy Books, the Drawing Books, and the Book-keeping in the public school list, and the High School Grammar, the High School Latin, German and French Grammars in the high school list. The revision of the Grammar needs no justification. Every teacher knows that the study of grammar has undergone great changes in method, purpose and extent during the last ten years. The curricula and the examinations of the Education Department and of the university give evidence of these changes. Formal analysis and parsing, technical grammar, minute classifications, are gradually giving place to such a knowledge of the grammar of the language as is of value in the ordinary uses of life. What is true of grammar is also true of arithmetic. Here the modern teacher demands such a treatment of the subject as develops in the student accuracy, rapidity and neatness of execution—all virtues of vast importance in the modern industrial world. A mere reference to the great changes in execution, in map-work and plate-work, to political and industrial changes in China, South Africa, Australia, the Yukon District and Western Canada, to industrial, commercial and statistical changes during the last decade (the geography was authorized in 1887), will fully justify the issuance of a new geography.

There have been two authorized copy book sets, one the vertical and the other the ordinary Spencerian style. The vertical was a copyright reprint of an American edition, with American sentiments in the headlines. The authorization of a new set more national in spirit in lieu of this latter set bears its own justification. Changes in copy books are, however, of little significance in the matter of cost, for new copy books are never bought until the old ones are filled and discarded. Drawing is a comparatively new subject in school courses in Canada and elsewhere, and, like all new subjects, its nature and extent are somewhat unsettled. Ten years have seen great changes, and these changes are represented in the new series. Drawing masters are now better able to classify and grade their

exercises, to give more prominence to industrial ends than heretofore ; their exercises now have life and purpose, where formerly they consisted of aimless circles, squares and triangles. The changes of the decade are seen best, however, in the improved paper, plate-work and binding, so necessary in books of art studies. But drawing book changes have as little significance financially to the pupils as copy books. A pupil does not purchase a new book until he has filled and discarded his old book. It is then immaterial to him financially whether he buy a book from the new or the old set of authorized texts. Properly speaking, there has hitherto been no authorized public school text in bookkeeping. The high school text which has been generally used, was too minute, too advanced, too theoretical and too expensive. A special public school bookkeeping text at about one-third the cost of the high school text has now been authorized.

The new edition of the High School Grammar was issued under conditions and for reasons exactly similar to those that obtained in connection with the Public School Grammar. Changes and discoveries in the departments of philology and historical grammar would alone justify the new edition. The demand for a revision of the grammars in the foreign languages came from a desire for a better arrangement of material, for more carefully selected exercises, and generally for a recognition of more modern pedagogical methods in languages.

It is not enough that these changes are advisable or necessary, or that they are insignificant in number. The Minister invariably has regard to other conditions. In the first place, changes should be asked for by teachers. No change has been made that has not been urged by the teachers in season and out of season in their county and Provincial associations ; and no change has been made that has not won the hearty commendation of all true teachers. In the second place, changes should be made with as little derangement of school life and economy as possible. For this reason the new editions, so far as compatible with the purpose to improve and correct, correspond in treatment with the old, and are to be used side by side with them. With this idea the masters are urged to change from the old editions gradually, and with the least possible disturbance and expense. For this both editions are authorized, and both alike must be considered by examiners and teachers in preparing and valuing the answer papers of candidates. Finally, for this reason the regu-

lations specially provide that any school board may by resolution retain the old edition in use. In the third place, changes should be made with due regard to the cost to the pupils. The revised arithmetic, grammar, geography, and copy books of the public school list are indisputably better books mechanically—and the excellent if imperceptible influences of well-made books should not be overlooked—than the old editions, and yet the old prices remain, viz.: grammar, 25c; arithmetic, 25c; geography, 75c; copy books, seven books at 7c each. In drawing, the new edition consists of five books at 5c each, instead of six books at 5c each, a decreased cost of 5c per pupil; while in bookkeeping a 60c book has been replaced by a more suitable 25c book. To the public school pupil, then, who buys all the new editions, the decreased cost is 40c. If it were possible to consider the 470,000 public school students, the saving would be \$180,000.

The High School Grammar remains as heretofore at 75c. The revision of the grammar of the foreign languages was taken advantage of to amalgamate grammars and readers, with admirable results to the convenience of the student. This amalgamation obviates also the evil of annual changes in the selections to be read, and decreases the cost of text books by one-half, as can be seen by a reference to the cost in 1899 and 1901 or 1902. In 1899 the Latin Grammar, with the required selections from Cæsar and Virgil for Form I., II. and III., of the high schools, cost \$2.25. With the new edition they cost \$1.50. In French the corresponding amounts in 1899 and 1901 are \$2.50 and \$1.25; in German, \$2.25 and \$1.50. This means a saving to a student in Latin of 75c, to a student in German of 75c, to a student in French of \$1.25, or to a student in the three languages of \$2.75. But other changes that are not revisions have also resulted in great savings to the high school students. The High School Botanical Note Books, (Part I. at 50c, and Part II. at 60c), have been withdrawn from the list of authorized books, together with the book-keeping blanks at 25c, making an additional saving of \$1.35. When the interest of 19,000 high school students and about 20,000 students in continuation classes are considered, the total of the possible saving of \$4.10 per pupil becomes enormous.

A change in ten out of fifty-one text books after the lapse of more than a decade does not seem excessive. They have been much less frequent than in the United States; quite less frequent than in England, where the local school authorities practically control the text

books ; decidedly less than in France, where the teachers themselves may annually revise the text book lists. In the latter country it must be remembered there is much, educationally speaking, to be admired. In the case of several of the books the revisions of which are complained of there had been no change for as long a period as from ten to thirteen years. And if changes are not numerous and not frequent, why this idle repeating of "the confusion and annoyance of endless changes?" Shouting parrot-like "new books" proves nothing. There is no magic in the use of the word "changes." Reiterating the word "changes" is not argument. The question is, have we better books than formerly, and were the changes imperatively called for in the interests of the schools.

(From The Toronto Globe.)

APPOINTMENT OF DEPARTMENTAL EXAMINERS.

The Educational Council of Ontario consists of twelve members. As one of its duties this council appoints the examiners and assistant examiners for the July examinations. These examinations are the combined matriculation and departmental examinations, and, as the senate of the university has full control over the matriculation examinations, it is but natural that in transferring these examinations to the control of the council the senate should be given representation in the council. As a matter of fact and law, the senate appoints six out of the twelve members of the council. For the current year these six are:—Dr. Loudon, President of Toronto University; Chancellor Burwash of Victoria University, Dr. Teefy of St Michael's College, Principal Hutton, Prof. Baker and Dr. Macallum of Toronto University. The Minister of Education appoints the remaining six members, and for the current year these six are:—Rev. Dr. Clark of Trinity University, Rev. Dr. Farmer of McMaster University, Prof. Knight of Queen's University, Principal Fessenden of Peterborough Collegiate Institute, Mr. Tytler, Inspector of Public Schools of Guelph, and Mr. Armstrong, Principal of Borden Street School, Toronto.

This council has been charged with improper and unworthy purposes, and its members described as time-servers, subject to party

and church prejudices, to "pulls" and other sinister motives. These charges were thoroughly unfair and ungenerous. Fearing lest, in the intensity of party strife, politics should enter the educational life of this Province, and, in destroying popular sympathy for education, do inculcate harm to its cause, the present Premier created the Educational Council in 1896. It was a wise creation. By it he hoped to place beyond the reach of political clamor all questions of courses of studies, examinations and certificates, while at the same time he would not shrink from the responsibility that should attach to a Minister of the Crown. Twelve of the foremost educationists of the Province do honor to its educational interests by serving without remuneration on its chief council. They attend its frequent meetings and perform its onerous duties merely out of their interest in education. Anxious to be accurate and impartial, they make nominations of examiners by ballot, and yet it is said their balloting argues concealment and deceit.

The paper which makes the attack contrasted the general appointments of the university senate and of the Minister of Education. The senate, it said, was a fair and independent body; its appointments were admirable. The Education Department was hopelessly dependent and time-serving; its appointments were improper and unworthy. When it learns now that this senate appoints six out of the twelve members of the council it will probably shift its ground and say it was speaking only of the Minister's nominees, not of the senate's. Under the statute the opposition of four out of the senate's six nominees will defeat any appointment by the other eight members. But let us confine the charges to the Minister's nominees, and what is their full significance? The Rev. Dr. Clark, the Rev. Dr. Farmer, these are the Minister's nominees, and are they subject to dishonorable influences? Past and present students of Trinity and McMaster Universities, the Anglican and Baptist churches throughout the Province, the scholarly world everywhere will resent the faintest suspicion of a charge against these gentlemen. Dr. Knight, for many years Principal of the Kingston Collegiate Institute and now professor of biology in Queen's University; Mr. Tytler, formerly headmaster of several Ontario high schools, late Principal of the Guelph Collegiate Institute, now Inspector of Public Schools for the City of Guelph; Mr. Fessenden, the well-known Principal of the Peterborough Collegiate Institute; Mr. Armstrong, one of the most progressive and successful public school Principals of the City of Toronto—these, too, are the Minis-

ter's nominees, and will any responsible person call them his political playthings? It does not matter whether the unworthy motives were said to originate in the breasts of the members themselves or were inspired by the Minister, the charges that the members acted from unworthy motives will be rejected by every teacher in the Province.

The other side of this charge reflects upon the examiners themselves. Many of the two hundred teachers who act as associate examiners in Toronto owe their appointments, this paper says, to improper influences, to church, to politics, to "pulls." Despite the fact that they are legally qualified to act as examiners, and by length of service and by successful experience have deserved appointment, many are regarded by this critic as ignorant, prejudiced and even dishonest. He pretends to cite a case in point. A candidate for a certain examination in 1894 was dishonest, he says, and his examination was cancelled, and yet he served last year as an examiner. It matters little to this critic that the wrongdoing was atoned for seventeen years ago, that by his continued success as a teacher during those seventeen years all traces of the fault have been wiped away. It matters much to the reader, however, to know that the whole incident is untrue to the facts. No such person has been appointed an examiner.

The council, as has been said, appoints the examiners, and the Minister supplies the council with the lists from which the appointments are made. These lists contain only the names of such teachers as are actually engaged in teaching the subjects of examination, and are legally qualified by professional status to act as examiners.

The names of such persons as have not satisfactorily performed their duties in the past and of such as would not be regarded as suitable examiners are not submitted to the council. With these exceptions—and these exceptions we are informed are singularly rare—the names of all teachers qualified under the statute are forwarded to the council. With each name the Minister submits certain information, viz.: The teacher's experience, his scholastic standing, the subjects taught, the school, the dates of his former service as examiner (if any), etc. All other information in the possession of the Minister is at the council's disposal, even to the inspector's reports upon the teacher's professional work. What more could be asked or granted?

Supplied thus with information that has about it no traces of special recommendation or preference, the council is at liberty to act

as it pleases. As a rule an efficient examiner is reappointed for three years, but never for more than three. Having once served out a three-years' term, it is a practice not to reappoint an examiner before his fellow-teachers who have taught as long as he have served in turn. By what, then, is the council influenced in making its appointments? The scholastic standing, the professional certificates, the length and character of the experience, the subjects taught, the dates of previous service as an examiner (if any), these are the most important influences; but there are others. There is need, occasionally, for an experienced man in an inexperienced section, and an old examiner receives a second appointment. Certain subjects, *e.g.*, grammar, history, etc., need twice or three times as many examiners as other subjects, *e.g.*, algebra, and, as a consequence, reappointments are more common in some subjects than in others. It is not the duty of the council to consider in these appointments the claims of any particular geographical area, of any college or of any school. Its duty is to appoint capable examiners, and that duty it performs in an eminently satisfactory way. It might be claimed that the Minister, with special officers of the Education Department, is better able to make these appointments. What a splendid opportunity for charges of political favoritism! The joint board, a university and departmental committee, appointed the examiners between 1890 and 1897. As the high school inspectors, paid officials of the Education Department, were members of this committee, how heroically such critics as our contemporary rang the changes on "pulls," politics, party, etc. In the council we now have an independent body of the foremost educationists of the Province, and this body has at its disposal in its decisions all official documents and reports of the Education Department. What better appointing body could be devised?

(From the Toronto Globe.)

DISCUSSING EDUCATION.

Although it would be too optimistic to expect that we can ever reach a general agreement as to educational methods, we may well entertain the hope that great progress may be made by careful study of the problems involved, by free discussion and the comparison of results. The discussion, to be of any value, however, should be freed as far as possible from bias, and this, is to be feared, educational

discussion in the Opposition press too seldom is. One would imagine that the theory at the back of most of their statements is that the Minister of Education is a gentleman possessed of a demoniac hatred of the public school system, and that his hourly study is how he may destroy it. They do not appear to have any clear views of their own on the matter, but when they are fortunate enough to come across the views of an educationist which run counter to the practice of the department they publish them, as if they were the last words on the subject, and that anyone holding other views is either fatuous or malevolent.

It may be said at once that we cannot hope for a Minister of Education whose views of duty and policy will gain universal acceptance. It would be a great mistake, nevertheless, to suppose that this is a proof that his critics are always right and that he is always wrong. Sensible men who undertake the discussion of the question admit its complexity, and advance their views with a modesty that is the reverse of dogmatism. This is well illustrated in the address of Mr. Henderson, read at the meeting of the Dominion Educational Association, which the Opposition press are disposed to regard as an attack on the department. Mr. Henderson has his view, and urges it with force and ability, but he does not deny that contrary views are held by men who have given the subject careful study. "Unfortunately," he says, "there is no consensus of opinion as to the proper remedies, nor is there absolute agreement as to the defects. This want of harmony arises from the different standpoints of the critics. The university professor has one view, the high school inspector another, and the Education Department a third. To a certain extent the intelligent observer, not connected directly with our educational work, takes a line of his own."

Every unprejudiced person will recognize that this a statement of fact, so plain is it that we have not arrived at an agreement on many vexed questions. The only way to approximate to such an agreement is to encourage free and fair discussion, and we are sure that there is no disposition on the part of anyone in the department to stifle such discussion. We feel sure that the reports of these discussions find nowhere a more careful reader than the Minister of Education. There is plenty of evidence that he profits by them. Mr. Henderson and others, for example, represented at various educational meetings that the multiplication of examinations was an evil. It is a subject surrounded with difficulties, for whatever objectionable conse-

quences may flow from examinations, no better practicable means has yet been suggested whereby the pupil's knowledge of a subject or the teacher's fidelity or capacity may be tested as by examinations. The department, however, admitted the force of the arguments of Mr. Henderson and his friends by greatly simplifying the scheme of examinations, showing that it is not the deaf and blind and rut-bound machine that party feeling would sometimes represent it to be.

Even with respect to this, however, the opponents of the department do not speak with one voice, for occasionally we hear the complaint that there are too many changes. Both charges can hardly be right, and it is likely that the truth will be found between the two extremes. Is it not possible to discuss this important question wholly divested of its bearing on politics? It will not do to say that the way to do this is to put a non-political head in control. This has been tried, and it did not save the department from criticism, tinged by political acrimony. The head, whether in Parliament or not, being appointed by a political party, would be regarded as a politician. If that must be the case let us have a politician whom the people can reach, and for whose conduct and fitness the Government would be responsible. It should be quite possible under even such circumstances to discuss educational questions calmly and rationally, and to give the Minister credit for an honest interest in the important matters put under his charge.

(From The Brantford Expositor.)

SCHOOL BOOKS.

A good deal is being said just now about the cost of the text books used in our public schools. It is safe to say, however, that there is one bit of information with regard thereto that the Opposition will not cite, viz.: the report of the school book arbitration which was appointed in 1899, and consisted of Mr. James Bain, librarian of the Toronto public library, representing the Government; Richard Brown, wholesale book manufacturer, representing the book manufacturers, and Judge Morgan. After a session of fourteen days and examination of twenty-one witnesses, the arbitrators reported against a reduction in price of the text books used in the public and high schools, with the exception of one, viz.: the High School Drawing course. The reduction in this case recommended was from 20 cents

per copy to 15 cents. The following extract from the report of the arbitrators is worthy of note:—

An examination into the prices charged in the United States for school books almost identical with those forming the subject of this reference, has satisfied us that the prices of Canadian school books are far below the prices obtained in the United States, and that the Education Department of Ontario has exercised extreme care in dealing with each work as to the retail price thereof, so that the public has obtained the books at lower prices than could have been obtained under any other system than the system of authorization now adopted by the department, and this system, while it fully protects the public and secures low-priced school books, appears to be reasonably fair to the publisher.

The arbitrators proved their statements by comparisons of prices between American and Ontario school books.

The school-book commission appointed at a later date made a similar report.

The government has steadily reduced the number of text books until now there is only one text book in each course, it has made as few changes as possible in the text books themselves and it has sought to encourage our own teachers to undertake the authorship of all school books. The result of its efforts to lessen the cost is shown by the fact that whereas in 1875 it required 24 text books at a cost of \$10.83 to complete the public school course it can now be completed with almost one-third the number of books at a cost of something like \$5.

From The Toronto News (Conservative), July 17th, 1901.

There will be some difficulty in making a case against the Government on the school book arrangements. The publishers who are favored with the business at present may be making a pot of money out of it, and they may be contributing to the campaign funds in return for the concession, but the books are well made, and they are not sold at an extortionate price. There are weaker points in the armour of the Ross Government than the school book monopoly.

(From a Leading Educational Journal.)

What text-books are perfect? No geography, history, singing book, writing book, scientific book, spelling book or arithmetic is perfect. There is none that does not have to face the scorn of a multitude of scholarly persons.

What text-book has the approval of all eminent authority? No progressive text-book for elementary school, preparatory school, or

college has such approval. On this basis the legislature of Connecticut could exclude from use every up-to-date text book in drawing, music, writing, language, and number, every reader, Nature study book, botany, psychology, algebra, and geometry, every text-book in Latin, German and French. There is not a modern text-book, method or device now used in Connecticut against which there may not be arrayed practically as much eminent, authoritative disapproval as was arrayed against the scientific temperance text-book.

THE MIDSUMMER EXAMINATIONS.

Each recurring midsummer there is a certain amount of complaint about the Departmental and University Examinations. Some portion of this is obviously due to a desire to make political capital at the expense of the Government, and in certain quarters criticism would promptly cease if the other party were in control of the same examinations and were conducting them in precisely the same way. Some portion of it is due to the character of the examinations themselves, and to certain drawbacks connected with them. These are worthy of careful consideration, with a view of ascertaining whether the drawbacks are irremoveable.

In order to understand the system at present in use it is necessary to bear in mind the process of evolution through which it came into existence. Formerly, public school teachers' certificates were ranked in three classes—first, second and third—and were granted to teachers on an examination by a board of examiners for each county. There was hardly a pretence of uniformity in the standards observed, and therefore, each certificate was limited to the county in and for which it was granted. In 1871 a change took place in this crude system, so far as the higher certificates were concerned, these being granted after examination by a Provincial board, and being made valid for the Province at large and for life. At a later period the same requirement and privilege were imposed on and conceded to teachers of all grades. Obviously such a system implied a uniform test, and, therefore, the answers had to be read, as the questions were prepared, by a central committee and assistant examiners. This was the origin of the present much criticised system.

At the time when this change took place, and for years after, the High Schools were expected to prepare candidates, not merely for teachers' certificates, but for matriculation into various learned insti-

tutions and corporations. There were half a dozen or more of these examinations, all different, and the work of the High Schools was greatly hampered and hindered by needlessly complicated classification. After years of effort, complete uniformity of matriculation tests was secured, and ultimately the teachers' examinations and the matriculation examinations were made substantially identical.

Those who strove long and earnestly to bring about this uniformity of High School work and examinations thought they were effecting a genuine reform, however opinions may vary on that point now in the light of experience. It is certain that the High Schools gained by simplification of the course of study and of the time-table of work. Possibly, we may have gone too far in some respects in identifying the examinations for teachers' certificates with the examinations for matriculation. This is a fair subject for calm consideration and discussion, but it may be safely assumed that no High School master would care to go back to the old system of several different matriculations along with the Departmental tests for teachers' certificates.

Unfortunately for the cause of education, it seems impossible to have this subject discussed without bias and without acrimony. All sorts of motives are imputed in connection with the appointment of members of the Educational Council who appoint the examiners, in connection with the appointment of the examiners who prepare the question papers, and in connection with the appointment of sub-examiners who read the answer papers. All these appointments are probably fairly made, and it is impossible to prove that they are not so. It would be better to assume this, and devote attention to the best means of lessening undoubted evils connected with the examination system itself. Some of these are apparent enough, such as the tendency to "cram" and "rate" work, the tendency to judge the teacher by the number of candidates he passes, rather than by some higher test, and the tendency to set up unseemly rivalry between the secondary schools.

(From the Toronto Globe.)

THE TORONTO PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

The discussion of the standing of Toronto school children at the entrance examinations has not proceeded so far as to enable a judgment to be formed. It is already clear, however, that the criticism directed against the Toronto schools is diametrically opposite to

the criticism directed against the Ontario School system in general. We have been told that in the Ontario system too much attention is paid to examinations; it is now said that in Toronto examinations are neglected. We have been told that examinations ought not to be regarded as the test of a teacher's work; the schools of Toronto are now criticised adversely on the ground that they do not pass a large enough percentage of children at the high school entrance examinations. We have been told that the public school education, being the only education that the mass of the children receive, ought to be "rounded off," complete in itself, and not a mere step towards a collegiate and university education; we now find the Toronto schools attacked because they do not sufficiently answer the purpose of steps toward collegiate and university education. Again, we have been told that business men complain that public school pupils cannot write a good English letter or calculate quickly or correctly. The fifth book classes are established for the very purpose of supplying this want, and of meeting as far as possible the demand for a rounded off education; now we find the fifth book classes attacked as overlapping high school work, and drawing off pupils who would otherwise pass the entrance.

These contradictions show not that all the criticism is wrong or absurd, but that the critics ought to make up their minds as to what is really required, and then, having the standard fixed, to discover how far education falls short of it and what are the causes of deficiency.

In his reply to Dr. John Ferguson, Inspector Hughes argues strongly against taking examinations as an absolute test of the efficiency of teaching. He points out also that the examiners are different for each city, so that there is no common standard. He says that in Toronto the entrance to the collegiate institutes is not made a goal for the efforts of the pupils to the same extent as in other places. "In Toronto a comparatively small number of pupils ever try the entrance examination, and the work of the schools is planned and carried out for the great majority and not for the small minority. The pupils who write at the entrance examination in Toronto are not by any means the best pupils in our schools. In the cities named by Dr. Ferguson the candidates at entrance examinations are the best pupils in the schools."

The controversy, while intrinsically of great interest to the pupils of Toronto, also furnishes a curious comment on the charges made

against the "autocrat" at the head of the Ontario system, grinding down all the schools into an absolute uniformity. Here we find so much difference between the Toronto methods and those in vogue elsewhere that they might almost belong to different systems. The importance attached to examinations is largely a matter of choice on the part of teachers, parents and local authorities. There is perfect liberty for people in other places to follow the Toronto methods if they so desire.

PROF. LOUDON AND EDUCATION.

Professor Loudon, Principal of University College, Toronto, in his convocation address recently, dealt with the necessity of school and university reform in this Province. Prof. Loudon, while no doubt honest in his criticism of our educational system, did not escape the influence of his environment. He is a prominent educationist, but chiefly concerned with the higher education, with which he is associated, and his treatment of his subject admitted only consideration of the faults he pointed out in relation to the interests of this higher education, ignoring largely those of primary and intermediate education, which should be concurrently considered in any discussion of the subject, beyond a mere academic and theoretical treatment. In his dealing with the "unnecessary waste of time" by the youth of our country in obtaining a liberal education—a university degree—Prof. Loudon from his point of view—the university point—may fairly be credited with having made three points. "The undue postponement of language study" is worthy of consideration, for it is universally conceded that in early youth the power of acquiring languages—chiefly a work of memory—is at its best. Then, again, from his point of view it may be conceded that other subjects are unduly fostered in the public school course, especially when done at the expense of early acquirement of languages; and then again, Prof. Loudon, is not alone, from his view point, in desiring a reduction of an undue number of examinations. But from an educationist of the responsibility and eminence of Prof. Loudon, we might reasonably expect something more than destructive criticism. It is easy to point out faults in the best of human arrangements and devices. Prof. Loudon frankly confesses that he proposes no remedy for the conditions he criticises, a confession one would hardly expect from a gentleman, who from his official position, is a part of the education

department, and to some extent, at least, responsible for the conditions that prevail in connection with it. In reference to his complaint in regard to the undue postponement of the study of languages, he cannot be ignorant that the study of languages is permissive in the public schools, and as one interested, it is perhaps not unreasonable to expect that he should suggest some way of reaching, from his point of view, such desideratum. He must recognize the fact that there are difficulties in the way of realizing his first postulate. The study of languages in the public schools would encounter popular prejudice, for it must be remembered that the public school subjects which Prof. Loudon seems to think unduly supersede the study of languages, are to the great mass of the children of the Province their sole education—their university degree—and, while the proficiency in them may not be final, it at least, fits the possessor for taking his place in his station in the world, and forms the basis, where the will exists, of self-improvement in after years. And a University education can do no more, except in degree : for a University course receives perhaps its chief value from the training in methods of study and economical exercise of thought, and is, broadly considered, not an end any more than a course in a public school—only the means to an end. From the view point of the president of a college, Prof. Loudon may be justified in demanding that our primary schools may have languages added to their curriculum—they are permissive, at the will of the trustee boards now, and in some cases are actually taught. But he should be able in the interests of higher education to persuade trustee boards and ratepayers to permit the public school to be used for the study of languages. If he can do so, without impairing the efficiency of these colleges of the masses, no one will say him nay.

Prof. Loudon's comparison of the earlier age at which pupils of German schools reach certain educational stages, than that of our High School or Collegiate Institute pupils, is a phase of his subject which he does not seem to have adequately considered. We are assured by one of the most eminent and successful High School principals in Ontario, that any pupil of fair parts and with reasonable diligence can reach the matriculation stage at the age of seventeen, and that without entering the public school before seven. When a later age is reached the fact is not due to the system but is generally due to the pupil himself or herself, or the intrusion by foolish parents of social dissipations into the pupil's school life, with the natural result of arrested progress and wasted time.

The High School is described by Prof. Loudon, speaking still in the interests of higher education, as "chiefly a training school for teachers in their non-professional work." Here Prof. Loudon seems to forget that to teachers he owes no little of the length of the class rolls of his, and other colleges as well. It is, while not altogether desirable in the interests of teaching, still inevitable in a young country like Canada, where the wealthy classes are yet sparsely represented, that teaching should be made a stepping stone to higher education and professional life. There are comparatively few fathers who can give their sons a "higher education" for its own sake, and the ranks of our professions, and even some of the highest public positions, are filled by men who—*per ardua ad astra*—reached their high places through the hard course of a teacher's work. And this fact accounts in a way which Prof. Loudon does not seem to recollect, for his complaint of the late stage in life at which University students graduate. We know of one of the most solid and best-equipped educationists of the Province, who varied his college course by intervals of teaching—compelled thereto by lack of means—and it was not till the age of 28 years that he took his degree. With hundreds of other students pursuing their college course under similar conditions, is it unreasonable to assign this as more the cause of the late average of graduating than the failure to teach Latin in our kindergartens?

Prof. Loudon complains that there are too many examinations, but he should know that the Education Department has made earnest endeavor to minimize the number. As a member of the Senate, was he not a party to an arrangement between the Department and the Colleges by which Junior and Senior Leaving examinations are accepted by half a dozen Colleges as equivalents for certain College examinations, at the same time answering for non-professional qualifications for teachers; and saving High School teachers from the multiplicity of text books and the dispersion of teaching energy involved in preparing a class of say half a dozen for matriculation examinations of as many different colleges. We understand, moreover, that it is in Prof. Loudon's own power—by the stroke of his pen—within a week's time, to abolish one quarter of the alleged evil complained of. Other important Universities on this continent, of admittedly high standing—as high as that of Toronto University—have discontinued *in toto* the matriculation examination. If this were done at Toronto University, one-fourth of the examination "incubus" complained of would disappear. Prof. Loudon, instead

of requiring the existing matriculation examination could well accept, instead, certificates of the principals of Collegiate Institutes and High Schools in the Province to the effect that the students named in the certificates had pursued a certain course of training, were well grounded in certain subjects, and that they had reached an educational standing at least as high as that of the present matriculation standing. In this he could well trust the principals of our High Schools, who are, for the most part, graduates of his own university; and if he wished to extend the area of reform in respect to examination reduction, the continuation classes of the public schools, doing First Form high school work, afford another opportunity. Similar certificates of their teachers might be accepted in respect of pupils of matriculation efficiency. This idea may not be accepted, but it is still an advance on Prof. Loudon's position—he declares he is not ready with any remedy, a somewhat remarkable admission. If one's watch runs badly and will not keep time a watch expert is consulted, not to discover the faults—faults are easily seen—but to render a really useful service, to find a remedy.

Everyone will be glad if all our University Professors will take a keen interest in public school matters and high school matters. The public may well expect from them valuable advice in this way. In what we say, therefore, we have no wish to speak harshly of Professor Loudon, though he has only considered the subject from one aspect—the interests of university education. We wish simply to point out the fact that there are difficulties in connection with these matters that did not seem to come within the scope of his address, and if, instead of merely indicating defects, his recognized ability to suggest remedies had been exercised it is not too much to say that additional value would have been given his address. Constructive criticism by eminently competent authorities, represented by Professor London and other University professors, would be of practical value where legitimate interests so susceptible of becoming conflicting elements are to be dealt with, and where the united wisdom and unbiased co-operation of our best educationists are called for.

In this matter it will be noticed as a very striking fact that President Loudon and Mr. Whitney, the leader of the Opposition, hold quite opposite views. The former would begin University studies in the Public schools. Mr. Whitney insists that there shall be drawn a sharp line between the work of the Public schools and that of the High schools. Each of these views is extreme. This case forms no

exception to the generally correct rule that the middle view—the moderate course—is the wise one.

DOES NOT AGREE WITH PROF. LOUDON.

Prof. Loudon, of Toronto University, is just now the idol of the enemies of Ontario's Public school system. Not that they agree with his views of what our primary schools should be, but is enough that he assails them. Prof. Loudon denounces the Public schools because they teach English, arithmetic and grammar, instead of Latin, Greek and Hebrew. He makes no serious attempt to show that his plan would be practicable, or if so, that it would be better than our present plan of teaching first the subjects of general utility ; it is merely his opinion, unsupported. There are others and their views will appeal to many. Prof. Laurie, Edinburgh, perhaps at least as eminent in the world of education as Prof. Loudon, in a Cambridge lecture, says :—

When I say that language is the supreme subject in all education, I mean the vernacular language, with some foreign tongue as a necessary auxiliary Mind grows only in so far as it finds expression for itself; it cannot find it through a foreign tongue. It is round the language learned at the mother's knee that the whole life of feeling, emotion, thought, gathers. If it were possible for a child or a boy to live in two languages at once equally well, so much the worse for him. His intellect and spiritual growth would not thereby be doubled, but halved. Unity of mind and of character would have great difficulty in asserting itself in such circumstances.

My own opinion is (but this is a matter on which there will be difference of view) that the beginning of the twelfth year is quite the earliest age at which grammar can be effectively taught Prior to the age of 11, and indeed very early at (8), a child should, by help of numerous examples, be taught to recognize the subject and its predication—the whole logical subject, that is to say; and the whole predicate—as constituting a sentence or proposition The first objection which will meet us is this : Inasmuch as a subsequent rule of methods demands that foreign grammars should be based on the native grammar, we should, by not beginning native grammar until the twelfth year, have to postpone Latin and French till the thirteenth at the earliest. To which my answer is : By all means; why not ? The merely imitative acquisition of French and German in the nursery—mere memory work at best—lies outside my present argument. But let me repeat here, in passing, that children should be made to live in the atmosphere of their mother tongue alone, and think through the vehicle of it alone, if we are to promote in them depth and solidity of nature and unity of character,

I have already shown you that the best culture a man receives through language is to be obtained only through his mother-tongue. While he seems to be deriving culture in foreign language, it is in fact chiefly from the comparisons, similarities, contrasts of the forms of thought and expression in that language with the forms already familiar to him, that he receives intellectual and moral benefit and a finer aesthetic perception.

If the new is to grow out of the old, Latin grammar, no less than Latin vocables, ought to grow out of English grammar. A boy should be able to parse fairly well, and be familiar with all the relations of clauses in English sentences, before he begins Latin. . . . He should not be introduced to Latin at all until he has a firm hold on English accidence, parsing and general analysis.

No doubt at all about the meaning of the eminent Edinburgh educationist. His views are clearly stated, and they appeal strongly to the educationists of Britain. He may be wrong and Prof. Loudon may be right ; it is just a case of contrary opinions. But Prof. Laurie stands very high in educational circles in Great Britain, and we may fairly put his dictum as fully offsetting that of Prof. Loudon, and leave the rest to the intelligence of the Canadian people. If they prefer that their children of ten years be set at studying Latin and Greek instead of reading and writing English, arithmetic, grammar and geography, they will of course approve of Prof. Loudon's attack on the work of the schools and decide against the Edinburgh man's theory that the best education the primary school can give a lad is education in English.